

What is claimed is:

1. A method for ordering a customized tire and for manufacturing a customized tire using computer-based communication, comprising the steps of:
 - displaying a representation of a tire, the representation indicating at least one selectable portion of the tire for customization;
 - displaying selectable features for the at least one selectable portion;
 - accepting a customer selection of a selectable feature to apply to the at least one selectable portion;
 - accepting a customer communication to order a custom tire having the selected features;
 - generating an order in electronic form to purchase at least one custom tire having the selected features; and,
 - manufacturing a custom tire according to said order.
2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a visual representation of the selected feature applied to the selected portion responsive to the customer selecting a selectable feature for application to the at least one selectable portion.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of providing the visual representation includes graphically displaying a representation of the selected feature on the selected portion.
4. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one selectable portion of the tire comprises a portion of the tread.
5. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one selectable portion of the tire comprises a portion of the sidewall.
6. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the selectable features comprise a plurality of individually selectable colored tread rubbers.

7. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the selectable portion is the tread, and the selectable features comprise a plurality of performance characteristics.

8. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of displaying tire size selections and accepting a communication indicating a selected tire size for the order.

9. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of accepting a communication indicating a selected tire model.

10. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of displaying a quantity selection and accepting a communication indicating a selected quantity for the tire order.

11. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein portions of the tire identified as selectable remain selectable after a feature is applied until said communication to order the tire is received.

12. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of accepting a communication link with a customer responsive to a request for a link prior to displaying the image of the tire.

13. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of manufacturing a custom tire comprises using the order in electronic form to control an automated manufacturing process.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, further comprising the step of generating from the tire order a manufacturing specification for the tires of the order.

15. The method as claimed in claim 14, comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of extruders, each extruder being dedicated for stripwinding one of a plurality of tire components, each component corresponding to one of the selectable features;

selecting, according to the manufacturing specification, an extruder having a component for the selected feature;
extruding and stripwinding the component for incorporation in an uncured tire;
and
vulcanizing the tire.

16. The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein a plurality of features are selectable and the step of selecting an extruder includes selecting a plurality of extruders and the step of extruding and stripwinding includes sequentially extruding and stripwinding a component from each of the plurality of extruders.

17. A method for customizing a tire and ordering for manufacture a customized tire using computer-based communication, comprising the steps of:

displaying a representation of a tire tread, the representation indicating at least one user-selectable portion of the tread;
displaying a plurality of selectable colors for tread rubber;
accepting a customer selection of a color for tread rubber for the at least one selectable portion of the tread;
displaying a representation of the color applied to the selected tread portion;
accepting a customer communication to order a custom tire having the selected features;
generating an order in electronic form to purchase at least one custom tire having the selected color for the at least one selected portion of the tread; and
manufacturing a custom tire according to said order.

18. The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising the steps of displaying tire size selections and requesting a communication indicating a selected tire size for the order.

19. The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising the step of accepting a communication link with a customer prior to displaying the image of the tire.

20. The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the step of manufacturing the custom tire includes using the order in electronic form to control an automated manufacturing process.
21. The method as claimed in claim 20, further comprising the step of generating from the custom tire order a manufacturing specification for the order.
22. The method as claimed in claim 21, comprising the steps of:
- providing a plurality of extruders, each extruder being dedicated for stripwinding a tread rubber having one of a plurality of colors;
 - selecting according to the manufacturing specification an extruder having tread rubber having the selected color rubber;
 - extruding and stripwinding the tread rubber for incorporation in an uncured tire; and
 - vulcanizing the tire.
23. The method as claimed in claim 22, wherein a plurality of tread portions are selectable and the step of selecting an extruder includes selecting a plurality of extruders and the step of extruding and stripwinding includes sequentially extruding and stripwinding tread rubber from each of the plurality of extruders.